

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

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-----076137 290230Z /75
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PINT, SHUM, TW

SUBJECT:PRESS GUIDANCE ON ARREST OF CH'EN CHU

REFERENCE: TAIPEI 04029 AND PREVIOUS

DEPARTMENT PREPARED FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE ON ARREST OF
MISS CH'EN FOR JUNE 28 EA NOON PRESS BRIEFING. THERE WERE
NO REPEAT NO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE "-H'EN CHU AFFAIR".

Q: WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE ARREST OF MISS CH'EN
CHU?

A: MISS CH'EN WAS ARRESTED BY THE TAIWAN GARRISON COMMAND
(TGC), THE ROC'S INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION, ON THE
EVENING OF JUNE 23. ON JUNE 15, POLICE AND TGC OFFICIALS
RAIDED HER APARTMENT IN TAIPEI AND ALLEGEDLY FOUND "UN-
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LAWFUL REACTIONARY DOCUMENTS AND BOOKS" THERE. THESE
PAPERS WERE CONFISCATED AND MISS CH'EN WENT INTO HIDING.
SHE WAS FOUND AND ARRESTED BY THE AUTHORITIES ON JUNE 23 IN
THE RESIDENCE OF THE REVEREND RONALD BOCCIERI, AN AMERICAN
PRIEST WHO LIVES IN CENTRAL TAIWAN. A TGC PRESS RELEASE
OF JUNE 26 STATED THAT MISS CH'EN "HAS COOPERATED VERY WELL
DURING THE INTERROGATION. THE CASE IS NOW UNDER INVESTIGA-

TION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW."

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD THIS ARREST?

A: IT IS APPARENT FROM THE TGC REFERENCE TO "UNLAWFUL REACTIONARY DOCUMENTS AND BOOKS" THAT MISS CH'EN HAS BEEN ARRESTED ON POLITICAL RATHER THAN CRIMINAL GROUNDS. WE REGRET THE ARREST OF INDIVIDUALS ANYWHERE MERELY FOR POSSESSING BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS WHOSE POLITICAL CONTENT IS AT VARIANCE WITH A GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS.

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS ON TAIWAN?

A: OUR POLICY IS TO CONTINUE TO URGE THE ROC GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS. THERE HAVE BEEN IMPROVEMENTS RECENTLY, MOST NOTABLY LAST NOVEMBER'S LOCAL ELECTIONS, WHICH EVEN OPPOSITION CANDIDATES DESCRIBED AS THE FAIREST IN TAIWAN'S HISTORY. WE WOULD REGRET ANY ACTIONS WHICH WERE INCONSISTENT WITH TAIWAN'S EVOLUTION TOWARD A MORE OPEN SOCIETY.

Q: WHAT HAS THE USG DONE CONCERNING THIS MATTER?

A: WE HAVE ALREADY INDICATED TO THE ROC GOVERNMENT OUR INTEREST IN MISS CH'EN'S CASE ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS.
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ON INSTRUCTIONS, OUR EMBASSY HAS INQUIRED AS TO THE NATURE OF THE CHARGES AGAINST HER AND ABOUT HER PRESENT CONDITION. WE WOULD HOPE, SHOULD THE ROC GOVERNMENT DECIDE TO INDICT MISS CH'EN, THAT SHE WOULD BE TRIED IN A CIVILIAN RATHER THAN A MILITARY COURT. WE HAVE INFORMED THE GOVERNMENT THAT, IF THEY DECIDE TO TRY HER, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE EMBASSY OFFICERS PRESENT TO OBSERVE THE TRIAL.

Q: WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT FATHER BOCCIERI'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CASE?

A: MISS CH'EN WAS AT REVEREND BOCCIERI'S MISSION IN CHANG HUA COUNTY IN CENTRAL TAIWAN ON THE EVENING OF HER ARREST. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY FURTHER INVOLVEMENT IN THIS CASE ON FATHER BOCCIERI'S PART.
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